



(717)

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION**

Wednesday, July 14, 2010

6:00 p.m.

City of Huntington Beach

Civic Center – Council Chambers

2000 Main Street

Huntington Beach, CA 92648

Chair Kreitz called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m., Rechsteiner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Albert Gasparian; Jay Kreitz; Cathy McGough; John Myers; Allan Pogrund; Nick Tomaino; Brian Rechsteiner

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dave Hubbard (excused); Susie Jones (excused); Dan Moss (excused)

STAFF PRESENT: Jim Engle; David Dominguez; Mary Loadsman

PRESENTATIONS – none.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair – Chair Kreitz opened the floor for nominations for Commission Chair. Commissioner Pogrund nominated Kreitz. Chair Kreitz called for additional nominations for Commission Chair. There being no further nominations, the nominations were closed and the following motion was made:

MOTION:

Moved by Pogrund, seconded by Tomaino to re-elect Kreitz as Commission Chair.

Ayes: Gasparian, Kreitz, McGough, Myers, Pogrund; Rechsteiner, Tomaino

Absent: Hubbard, Jones, Moss

Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Kreitz opened the floor for nominations for Commission Vice Chair. Commissioner Myers nominated Tomaino. There being no further nominations the following motion was made:

MOTION:

Moved by Rechsteiner, seconded by Myers, to elect Tomaino as Vice Chair.

Ayes: Gasparian, Kreitz, McGough, Myers, Pogrund, Rechsteiner, Tomaino

Absent: Hubbard, Jones, Moss

Motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES:

Moved by Pogrund, seconded by Myers to approve the May 12, 2010 Community Services Commission minutes.

Ayes: Gasparian; Hubbard; McGough; Moss; Rechsteiner; Tomaino
Absent: Hubbard; Jones; Moss

Motion passed unanimously.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS –

Kaulin Hall, resident, spoke in favor of having a local outdoor remote control car (RC Car) area for families to enjoy.

Vance Hall, resident and RC Car enthusiast, distributed written communication offering support for an RC Car area. He provided a proposal from RCOperationsUSA to help offset expenses.

John Craney, resident and member of Meet-Up Group for HB volleyball players, spoke on behalf of the group's 800 members, noting they are in opposition to any changes made to the current first come first served method of play at the volleyball courts surrounding the Huntington Beach Municipal Pier. He also noted that the group is dedicated to playing volleyball in Huntington Beach with members contributing to the local economy by frequenting the local businesses.

Jason Poling, Stanton resident and RC Car enthusiast, spoke in support of an RC Car area.

Daniel Sparks, resident, stated that the public volleyball courts located by the municipal pier are being utilized in a discriminatory and discretionary manner by special interest groups, private business for financial gain, and others, in a manner that violates fair and reasonable access rights by the general public. He advocated rules similar to those adopted by the County of Los Angeles Beaches and Harbors.

Peter Mundth, resident, explained that the first come first served use of the volleyball courts by the municipal pier is difficult because these courts are the first to fill up and there is usually an extremely long wait. He offered suggestions on possible solutions including a reservation system or limiting court time.

Sinjin Smith, a resident of Pacific Palisades and professional volleyball player, noted his accomplishment of helping to build the AVP tour and his work with volleyball programs. He offered options to help ease some of the situations involved, including simple rules and regulations and posting a calendar of events so the players know the availability of the courts.

Gary Pope, resident and head of Groups Dynamics and USA Pro Beach Volleyball worldwide divisions, provided background that 15 years ago he held the first Women's Pro Beach Volleyball event at the municipal pier and left ten pro beach volleyball courts intact at the end of the tournament. He felt that play by the pier under the first come first served basis has deteriorated. He added that some players take advantage of the first come first served rule and privatize the courts on a regular basis. He stated that players of all levels should be allowed the opportunity to play on the volleyball courts and asked commission to look into the details and consider posting rules and regulations similar to Los Angeles Beaches and Harbors.

Charlie Barnes, an Anaheim resident and local RC Car businessman, stated that he has been conducting organized RC Car events at the Huntington Central Park Sports Complex through the Community Services Department for more than a year. He said the events are professionally organized and authorized through the permit process with Community Services. He explained that the group is extremely well attended and supportive of the community, adding that last year they conducted a toy donation drive for the city's Project Self-Sufficiency program with over 350 toys contributed for single-parents and needy families at the holidays. He spoke in support of having a RC Car area to help promote the hobby as a true family experience.

Tim Stuart, resident and former Charter Review Commission member, said he has never paid the Meet-Up group and joined the group after he moved to Huntington Beach from Seattle as a way to meet people and enjoy the sport. He said that volleyball on the beach in Huntington Beach range from first come first served to challenge courts, and the Meet-Up group offers a way to enjoy the sport in an organized manner.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS – Engle reported there have been several meetings with Board of Trustee members of Huntington Beach Union High School District (HBUHSD), Dr. Van Riley, HBUHSD Superintendent, three City Council Members, the City Administrator, and himself, on options for Worthy Community Park. He noted that it may be possible to keep one athletic field intact and that everyone is working for the common good. He will keep commission informed on the progress at Worthy Community Park.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS -

Beach Volleyball – Engle noted that the public comments are of diverse opinion on what happens at the beach volleyball courts and asked to bring the topic forward to commission for input. He introduced Marine Safety Chief Kyle Lindo to provide further information.

Lindo noted the concerns were a little beyond the scope of Marine Safety and that staff is looking for advisory direction from Commission. He explained that Huntington City Beach has the capacity for 50 volleyball courts over 3.5 miles of beach, although the amount of available courts is reduced to 30 potential courts during the busy summer months due to special events and beach access for the general public. He said staff has been working over the last several months to troubleshoot some of the issues, including adding courts; however, emergency access requirements limit court

expansion. He explained that there have been a number of people who have asked to have rules and regulations posted, as well as persons who support the first come first served play. Lindo explained that with the first come first served play, there are instances where the courts are held without persons playing on them, which results in some of the tension amongst patrons. He believes that providing a better definition of first come first served could help the situation. He added that staff has met with some of the groups requesting challenge courts and that all the courts by the pier are frequently occupied by mid-morning. He explained that specific staff is not available to monitor any rules and regulations without citing a municipal code and that Marine Safety's main objective is to provide beach safety services. Lindo introduced Rick Jennings, a contract instructor who runs the City's Junior Spiker's Volleyball Camp through Community Services.

Jennings explained that the court configuration by the municipal pier has 20 courts on the south side, 10 courts on the north side, and that during the summer months, the 20 courts on the south side are removed for beach patrons and special events. He works on a daily basis with Chief Lindo to maintain the courts, replace nets, and relocate the poles as needed. He agrees that there are issues with the definition of first come first served play, and is aware of requests for challenge courts and accommodations for some of the organized groups. He said that he has been working with Meet-Up to help alleviate some of the court congestion and has added six courts near Beach Boulevard. He explained that Meet-up has used the area over the last two weekends and has provided positive feedback. He explained that the courts are not exclusive to Meet-Up and is hoping that the Meet-Up players would appreciate that there is more available parking and will enjoy the amenities at this area of City Beach. He understands that the main issues are with the volleyball courts located adjacent to the municipal pier. He commented that on the weekends these courts are full by 9:00 a.m., and mentioned that a large number of patrons playing on the city volleyball courts during the summer weekends is positive.

Jennings explained that the courts around the pier are equipped with professional nets and have a natural "challenge" court occurrence. He explained that these courts are the courts preferred by the professional and semi-professional player, the more serious volleyball athlete, as well as group play, due to the proximity of the pier and downtown amenities. He added that there are no defined "women's" courts, that all of the poles are adjustable for net heights, accommodating the professional, women's or family play activity. Jennings reported that there are volleyball poles at 9th Street and other areas of City beach and that players can and do bring their own nets to make these courts playable.

Poggrund asked for an explanation of first come first served. Jennings replied that a clear definition has not been established. For example, does first come first served apply when someone sits by the courts to hold them, or, when someone is actually playing on the court? Poggrund asked Jennings to describe a challenge court. Jennings responded that after two teams have played, the loser leaves the court and the team waiting for the court "challenges" the winners. Play continues with winners staying and

losers leaving, each time a losing team leaves the court, a new “challenge” team plays the winner.

Poggrund asked about issues or solutions if things are kept status quo. Jennings responded that the main issues are lack of available courts throughout the day and courts are being held with no one playing on them. Commission members commented that this should not be allowed, and asked if there would be funding for signage and staff expenses if a rule system were established. Engle responded that this would be addressed after the commission’s recommendation. Engle commented that the first come first served system does not necessarily require enforcement, that signage with suggested rules and regulations may help, and that implementing an alternating court system for group and challenge play may work.

Rechsteiner asked about the biggest complaint. Engle responded that there seems to be some common requests; such as those that want challenge courts or changes that include a rule system, and those who want to keep the first come first served play status quo.

Chief Lindo added that staff performed an informal survey and found that in general, the first come first serve system naturally works to accommodate “challenge” and regular play.

Gasparian cited his understanding of the topic given his 25 years associated with volleyball. He added that he knows most of the speakers and recognizes the need to have courts to accommodate all skill levels including professionals, avid players, coaches and the recreational player. He reiterated that the vital function of Marine Safety is to keep the beach safe and that this particular topic has many facets that make it difficult to find a solution.

Chair Kreitz asked to defer the topic to the Special Interest Committee to investigate options and return recommendations to commission.

Remote Control Vehicles in City Parks – Dominguez noted that City Council introduced and adopted an ordinance to prohibit the use of remote control cars (RC Cars) in certain areas of city parks. Council however did not prohibit them completely, and asked Commission to identify appropriate park areas for RC Car use. The topic was referred to the Special Interest Committee to identify appropriate park areas throughout the city. The committee looked at multiple locations and decided the three most viable areas were located in Huntington Central Park (HCP). The committee identified locations as Areas 1, 2 and 3, with Area 1 being west of the former gun range, Area 2 east of the former gun range and Area 3, Adventure Playground. The committee established the pro’s and con’s for each site, taking into consideration concerns of noise, dust, impacts on other park amenities and park users, safety, availability of parking, and suitable conditions for RC Car enthusiasts. Adventure Playground was considered a suitable area for the RC Car enthusiast; however, the noise factor to the adjacent Youth Shelter, Amphitheatre, and Bandstand, coupled with the area only available during a portion of the year, influenced the committee to consider the other areas. Area 2, east of the

former gun range site, was not the most desirable for the off-road type battery powered cars given its asphalt surface. Area 2 is more secluded from the Sports Complex making supervision difficult and clean-up activities in this area would be more costly. Dominguez explained that the committee recommendations for Area 1 were based upon the surface area being desirable for RC Cars, its proximity to existing parking at the Sports Complex, the ability for staff oversight, its distance from residential areas, and minimal costs to demarcate the area for RC Car use. He did indicate concern about possible noise impacts to activities at the Sports Complex.

Rechsteiner asked if Area 1 was included in the HCP Master Plan. Dominguez responded that it wasn't, but Commission could recommend approval for a temporary use permit. If this area is later deemed appropriate as a permanent location for this activity by Commission, it could then go through the process of City Council adding it to the HCP Master Plan.

Rechsteiner asked about the proposed hours of operation. Dominguez responded that it would be open from 9:00 a.m. to dusk and 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. during daylight savings time. Staff would be responsible for locking and unlocking the gates.

Dominguez also reported that committee concerns included noise and safety issues with Nitro powered RC Cars and felt the trial basis should be limited to battery-powered remote control vehicles.

As Committee Chair, Pogrund said that the goal of the committee was to offer solutions to help make the sport accessible to the general population and to accommodate the RC Car enthusiast's needs. Dominguez added that there is a commercial facility in town that caters to the hobby enthusiast, and that the City will continue to support the organized RC Car events at the Sports Complex that are conducted under special permit.

Tomaino questioned the committee recommended action commenting that it did not address the Nitro/gas powered remote control vehicles. Dominguez responded that there were concerns with the high speed capabilities of Nitro powered vehicles. Pogrund responded that committee members felt that there were some safety issues with the fuel-powered cars and, therefore, made the recommended action.

Dominguez also reported that the committee expressed concern with the new ordinance language, which would allow RC Car usage at city parks except where posted. Efforts to identify prohibited areas could lead to considerable signage throughout city parks.

Motion:

Moved by Pogrund, seconded by Rechsteiner to approve the recommended actions as follows:

- 1. Recommend approval of Area 1 in Huntington Central Park adjacent to the Sports Complex and former gun range site for battery powered remote**

control vehicles on a trial basis for a period of one-year, with the condition that the Community Services Commission review usage after six months, or as issues arise and; funding for needed site modifications coming from the Park Acquisition & Development fund, and

- 2. Recommend modifying Park Ordinance 13.48.120 (i) to read “Operating any remote or radio controlled model car, truck or vehicle in any park other than those areas designated for such use by the Director; provided that this subsection shall prohibit the use of any fuel-powered model car, truck or vehicle.”**

Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS –

Blufftop Park Restroom Project –Dominguez noted that all six of the restrooms are in operation with some punch-list items to be completed after the recent vandalism. He expressed appreciation to City staff who made the extra effort to get the restrooms operational for the 4th of July weekend.

Community Garden – Dominguez reported the City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Beach Community Garden, a group of citizens who want to start a community garden. The proposed garden area is on property owned by Southern California Edison (SCE). Staff is currently negotiating a license agreement for the area. He explained that the license agreement with SCE would need to be approved before the garden group would be able to proceed with the project.

Junior Guard Storage Building – Dominguez reported the Junior Guard Storage Building has completed the entitlement process, having received a Coastal Development Permit for the project. He said the next step is for the contractor working with the Friends of Junior Guards to submit the plans for permits and provide a timeline for the project. The start date would occur after the Junior Guard Program ends for the year, or after Labor Day.

Edison Park – Dominguez reported that 90% construction drawings are being finalized and the project would go to bid in late summer with an anticipated start date in the fall. He reported the State is releasing grant fund monies and has hopes the city would receive funds soon to start Phase 1 of the project.

Tomaino asked what Phase 1 of the project includes. Dominguez responded activities included work on two parking lots, three practice fields, practice level lighting, and a drop-off area near the picnic shelter. He added that with the slow economy he hoped the bid process would be competitive.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION – Email memorandum dated June 7, 2010 from Director of Community Services to City Council and City Administrator regarding Beach Volleyball Courts.

COMMISSION COMMITTEE REPORTS –

Special Interest Committee – Pogrund noted the remote control vehicles in city parks topic recommendations were discussed as part of the agenda and commented that the meeting summaries included in the commission packet contained additional information as reference.

HCP Equestrian Center – McGough noted reporting on the HCP Equestrian Center at the previous Commission meeting and referred to the meeting summary. She reported the next regular meeting is scheduled for July 28, 2010.

COMMISSION AND STAFF COMMENTS – none.

ITEMS DISTRIBUTED

Council on Aging Newsletter, June and July 2010.
Council on Aging 2009 Annual Report and tri-fold brochure
Friends of Shipley Nature Center Newsletter, June 2010.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Community Services Commission regular meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Submitted by:

David C. Dominguez
Secretary
Community Services Commission

By: Mary Loadsman, Recording Secretary